

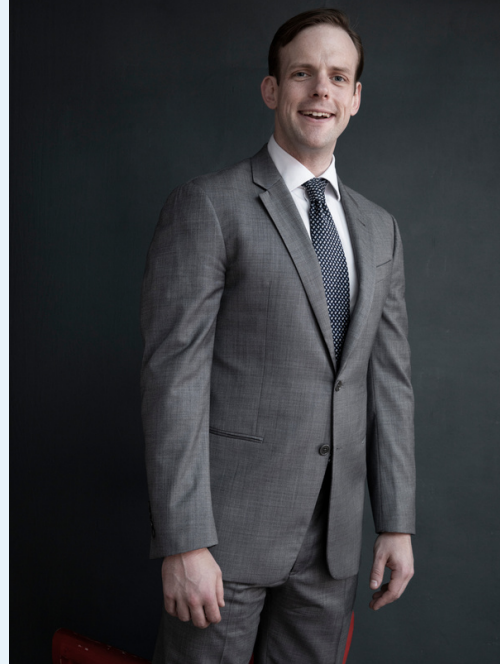
# BROOKLINE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2023

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S UPDATE

Dear Brookline,

Happy New Year! I hope your holidays have gone well and you're feeling energized (or at least not daunted) by the possibilities that 2023 presents us. For those of us up in the Select Board office on the sixth floor of Town Hall, we're in the depths of preparing for the public-facing side of budget season. The numbers themselves only tell part of the story. As Yasiin Bey, the artist formerly known as the mighty Mos Def, once said, "numbers is hard and real, and they never have feelings, but if you push too hard, even numbers got limits."



Behind the dry talk of deficits and revenue splits, that you're likely to hear a lot about if you tune in to any of the public hearings about our budget in the coming months, are serious, policy questions. What your community funds is what your community cares about. The Select Board had its first ever in-depth meeting dedicated to discussing the budget and broader town priorities on December 15th (the recording is [here](#)), and the conversation was illuminating. We're rounding the corner from the COVID-fueled uncertainty that drove us into an economic crouch, but we're also still dealing with the harsh "new normal" of high inflation and supply chain uncertainty while trying to return to something approximating a pre-COVID level of services. Against this backdrop, what do residents want the Town to provide? How should the Town pay for it?

I'm grateful to the Select Board for taking its agenda-setting work so seriously, and fortunate too that our broader budget process will feature meaningful guidance from the fiscal Advisory Committee of Town Meeting. I'm also looking forward to continuing Mel Kleckner's tradition of holding "Budget 101" meetings for the public at the end of the month so people can be well-informed when they join in the discussion about what our priorities should be and where the money to fund them should come from.

But since we'll be in the weeds of line-item budget balancing very soon, I wanted to take this opportunity at the start of the new year to refocus our attention on the big picture. One of my favorite documentaries about municipal government, if you've got an hour to kill on such a gripping subject, is *Bogotá/Change*, about two mayors of Colombia's capital city who helped transform it in radically different ways. Antanas Mockus, an independent protest candidate whose unlikely entry into government might be the strangest this side of Volodymyr Zelenskyy's, shifted the civic fabric of a city at its lowest point while leaving it with record surpluses, even though income inequality and unemployment remained vexing problems. Enrique Peñalosa, a far more traditional center-right follow-up with an international development background, nevertheless built on Mockus's work, breaking ground on massive well-integrated transportation projects and prioritizing an efficient good government in the face of entrenched special interests, though many argued his big business ties damaged the connection to the community that Mockus had built.

Two municipal governments with different visions, facing different problems, and coming up short in different areas, were, at least according to this documentary, largely successful in creating the kind of community that their constituents asked them to. It's an inspiring, feel-good story about what local government can do. Absent from the documentary is the fact that the hard work of translating those visions into action begins with the municipal budget. While it's my team's responsibility to assemble that budget here in Brookline, it's only with the community's input on the broader priorities that we can hope to succeed in making this a place in which you're proud to live and work. I hope you'll join in with your elected leaders as part of this process, and I look forward to hearing from you all as 2023 comes to life.

Best regards, and happiest wishes for your new year,  
Chas

Current listening: Mos Def – "Mathematics" [Clean Edit] (1999)

P.S.: On New Year's Eve, a burst pipe flooded a 100-unit Brookline Housing Authority building, cutting power to residents and seriously damaging some apartments. I'm extremely proud of the incredible interdepartmental coordination that municipal and BHA staff displayed over the holiday weekend to get some of our most vulnerable residents back into their homes or safely relocated. By Monday afternoon, full power was restored. The efforts of the Office of Emergency Management, Building Department, Fire Department, Police Department, Health Department, Library, and Council for the Aging to make that happen went above and beyond. I'm also grateful beyond measure for the 30 or so volunteers from our Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) who helped the residents. I hope to find time to thank everyone who made a difference here individually in the coming weeks, and I hope you are all proud of the people who do such good work for the Town each and every day.

# HOLIDAY COOKIE SWAP



To celebrate the holiday season, employees showed off their baking skills with a cookie exchange.

On the menu, red velvet crinkle cookies, thumbprints, chocolate chip, peanut butter, pistachio coquito, toffee squares, brownies, and cheese straws.

**Keep This, Toss That: How to Clear Clutter for 2023**  
with Jamie Novak  
Monday, January 30  
7 - 8 PM  
Virtual on Zoom  
Register at [brklib.com/events](https://brklib.com/events)  
GENEROUSLY SPONSORED BY THE LIBRARY TRUSTEES  
THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF BROOKLINE  
ALL LIBRARIES [brooklinelibrary.org](https://brooklinelibrary.org)  
Brookline Village 617-730-2370  
Coolidge Corner 617-730-2380  
Putterham 617-730-2385

## Keep This, Toss That: How to Clear Clutter for 2023 with Jamie Novak

Monday, January 30, 2023 | 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM  
via Zoom - [Click Here to Register](#)

If you can't open your drawers, if clutter topples out of closets, and paperwork covers your tabletops, then log on for decluttering tips with a humorous twist! Join Jamie Novak as she shares her approach for what to do with all the stuff – without getting overwhelmed. Wondering what to keep? What to toss? What to share or sell? And how to let it all go this new year? Log on for this interactive virtual program where Jamie guides you through a tiny tidy-up live.

## FLASH FICTION WRITING WORKSHOP

with Chandreyee Lahiri  
and Malavika Shetty

TUESDAY, JANUARY 10  
at 7 PM  
ON ZOOM



**Flash Fiction Writing Workshop**  
with Chandreyee Lahiri and Malavika Shetty  
Tuesday, January 10, 2023 | 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM  
via Zoom - [Click Here to Register](#)

Start off the year with creativity at our flash fiction writing workshop! Authors Chandreyee Lahiri and Malavika Shetty will discuss their own writing journeys, give an introduction to flash fiction (very short stories), and provide a writing prompt. Then everyone will have a chance to write their own piece of flash fiction. Come write with us, whether you've been writing for a while or you want to give creative writing a try.



# WINTER IS COMING:

## BRUSH UP ON BROOKLINE'S WINTER GUIDE

With the winter season upon us, the commissioner of Public Works would like to remind everyone to review the Town's [Winter Guide](#). It was mailed to all households in November and is an important resource regarding Brookline snow operations and resident/business responsibilities through and following snow and ice events. We continue to urge residents to sign up for [Alert Brookline](#) to receive special emergency alerts via text/email/call, including snow emergencies, from the Town.

Leading up to and during the 2022 Special Town Meeting there were important discussions regarding resident and business responsibility to "maintain sidewalks contiguous to their property in a non-slippery condition suitable for pedestrian travel by clearing all snow and ice from a pathway at least thirty-six (36) inches in width" in accordance with Town bylaws. The cleared walk must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, including the removal of snow and ice from any adjoining wheelchair ramps or curb cuts. Please help all members of our community move safely through Town on our public sidewalks.

The *Winter Guide* provides information about how long residents/businesses have to clear their sidewalks and the associated fines with non-compliance. We urge everyone to remember our most vulnerable neighbors during and following winter events. Please clear your sidewalk and ramps so that those with disabilities may have equal access to our public ways, to provide safe routes to school for our children, and to support the elderly and all neighbors in our community. In addition, we request that you clear around any fire hydrants within the public way and catch basins as feasible.

Similar to many communities across the country, the Town of Brookline Department of Public Works continues to face challenges with staffing, decrease in available contractual services, increase in costs, and supply chain disruptions. The combination of these factors will impact the time it takes the Department to provide the essential services to clear streets, sidewalks, ramps, parking lots, schools, public buildings, and public grounds, as well as designated bike lanes, parks, public paths, stairs, bus stops, and approved private ways.

The Town prioritizes the main arterial roadways and passage for emergency vehicles during snow events. It will then focus on neighborhood roads, schools and public buildings. In the event of a winter storm, the Department of Public Works will make every effort to clear the streets, sidewalks, school bus stops, and school parking lots for students and teachers before the school day starts. However, please know that depending on the storm, there may be times that school openings will be delayed or canceled. This is the same for other public buildings and recreational amenities. We also may need to delay municipal trash collection by a day more frequently than in years past if we need those crews to operate or remain in snow plow equipment. Sidewalk enforcement and public parking lots may be delayed due to crews remaining on snow management and removal operations. Again, we ask that all residents please help us and each other by clearing the sidewalks in front of your property and any nearby fire hydrants or catch basins. Requirements for residential snow clearing is outlined in the Winter Guide.

We ask for your cooperation as we enter the winter season and appreciate your understanding and patience as we work collaboratively to get through these winter months together.

The Town's electricity supply program for residents and small businesses, Brookline Green Electricity (BGE), began a new supply contract in December 2022, which will provide fixed prices for the next two years. The Town is proud to announce that under the new contract, the most popular offering in the Program, Brookline Green will provide 90% renewable energy in 2023 and 100% in 2024.

**Brookline Offers Big Savings this Winter\***

**Brookline Green Electricity**  
Town of Brookline | Community Electricity

**16.361** c/kWh  
**Brookline Green**  
(through December 2024)

**Eversource**

**25.649** c/kWh

Eversource Basic Service rate for Residential customers January - June 2023.  
\*Future savings cannot be guaranteed because Eversource rates beyond June 2023 are unknown.

Brookline Green will also cost less than Eversource Basic Service supply rate through June 2023, although future savings cannot be guaranteed. The Eversource supply rate is nearly 26 cents per kilowatt-hour (c/kWh), whereas the Brookline Green rate is about 16 c/kWh. Eversource rates beyond June 2023 are unknown.

Additionally, since the program launch, Brookline Green Electricity has yielded more than \$6.3 million in cumulative savings to participants (future savings cannot be guaranteed).

Starting with the electricity bill participants receive for December 2022, the Supplier name will change to reflect program's new supplier "Brookline Green Electricity c/o NES." BGE participants may change to another option in the program at any time or opt out of the program without penalty. To select a different BGE option or to opt out of the Program, use the [online form at BrooklineGreen.com](https://www.brooklinegreen.com) or call the new supplier, NextEra, at 877-960-5514. For questions about Brookline Green Electricity, please contact the Town's support line at (800) 931-6221.

## BROOKLINE CELEBRATES MLK DAY

The Town of Brookline's MLK Celebration Committee presents: "Conflicting Voices of Liberty and Slavery (1765-1795)" on Monday, January 16, 2023 at 3PM at the Coolidge Corner Theatre. This year's program includes keynote speaker, Pulitzer-prize winning historian Edward J. Larson, performance artist Regie Gibson, Joyful Voices of Inspiration Gospel Choir and Brookline Poet Laureate Jennifer Barber. [To learn more and to register for tickets click here.](#)

*The unanimous Declaration of the* **BROOKLINE CELEBRATES MLK DAY** *States of America*

*He wrote of liberty...for some*

*She sued for liberty...and won*

**Conflicting Voices of LIBERTY and SLAVERY 1765-1795**  
**3 pm Monday, January 16, 2023**

Featuring  
Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Edward J. Larson, keynote speaker  
Poet and performance artist Regie Gibson  
Joyful Voices of Inspiration Choir  
Brookline Poet Laureate Jennifer Barber

Live at the Coolidge Corner Theatre • Free but tickets required at [Coolidge.org/MLK](https://coolidge.org/MLK)

Presented by Brookline MLK Celebration Committee  
Sponsored by Brookline Community Foundation,  
Brookline Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Community Relations,  
Coolidge Corner Theatre, Brookline Innovation Group

For background stories and materials: [www.brookline.org/2023/01/09/mlk-2023/](https://www.brookline.org/2023/01/09/mlk-2023/)

## JESSE GELLER AWARDED 2022 CITIZEN PLANNER AWARD

The American Planning Association - Massachusetts Chapter (APA-MA) awarded Jesse Geller, Brookline Zoning Board of Appeals chair, the 2022 Citizen Planner Award on December 9th. A planning consultant that has served over 180 Massachusetts communities noted in her support letter that they "have very rarely seen a Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) chair manage the comprehensive permit process with the skill, the commitment to fairness, and the depth of understanding of Chapter 40B that Brookline's Chair Jesse Geller demonstrates at every public hearing." Congratulations to Chair Geller! Staff from the Department of Planning & Community Development and Building Department were thrilled to nominate him for this award, which may be the first awarded to a ZBA member.

The Brookline Indigenous Peoples  
Celebration Committee  
is Proud to Sponsor a Quarterly

# BOOK CLUB

January 2023

THIS MONTH'S PICK

Braiding Sweetgrass  
by Robin Wall Kimmerer

January 29, 2023 • 4:00PM • Zoom  
To RSVP please email [cstarr@brooklinema.gov](mailto:cstarr@brooklinema.gov)

The Brookline Indigenous Peoples Celebration Committee would like to invite you to participate in their first Indigenous Authors Book Club! Join us on Sunday, January 29, 2023 from 4-5:30 PM for a virtual Book Club conversation. This month we will be reading and discussing *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer.

To RSVP to the Book Club please contact Caitlin Starr at [cstarr@brooklinema.gov](mailto:cstarr@brooklinema.gov) or at 617-731-2345. To learn more about IPPC and this Book Club visit:

<https://www.brooklinema.gov/1555/Indigenous-People-Celebration-Committee>



## Town of Brookline Work Anniversaries - January 2023

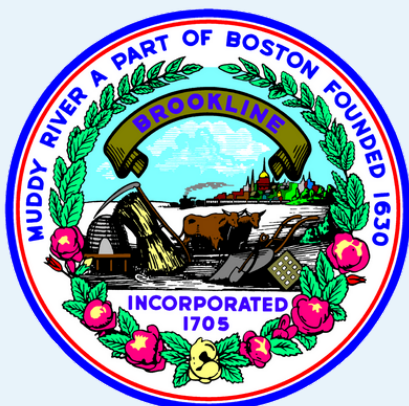
We are excited to celebrate the work anniversaries of our employees who joined the Town of Brookline in the month of January over the years. As you can see by the department listing, they are providing a diverse array of services to the Town's employees, residents, businesses and visitors. Thank you for your service!

Name	Department
Joseph Alvarado	DPW Parks & Open Space
Samuel Downes	DPW Engineering
Abigail Cook-Korosh	Health & Human Services
James Pouliot	IT
Oscar Rodas	Police Patrol
Hang Ha Pham	Health
Zegeye Sisay	Treasury
Johnnie Bloom	DPW-Sanitation
Charles Ryder	DPW-Maintenance
Louis Cintolo	Building Maintenance
Michaliz Marte	Police Administration
Ricardo Francis	DPW-Highway
Shannon Goodrich	Police Patrol
Douglas Yu	Police Patrol
Marc Hetnik	Police Patrol

<b>Name</b>	<b>Department</b>
<b>Michael Davis</b>	<b>Police Patrol</b>
<b>Gabrielle Dean</b>	<b>Health &amp; Human Services</b>
<b>Jennifer Stallion</b>	<b>Human Resources</b>
<b>Karen Szeto</b>	<b>Recreation</b>
<b>Brian Boudrot</b>	<b>DPW-Water and Sewer</b>
<b>Frank St. Luc</b>	<b>DPW-Water and Sewer</b>
<b>Katie Weatherseed</b>	<b>DPW-Highway</b>
<b>Gerald Morales</b>	<b>DPW-Parks &amp; Open Space</b>
<b>Maria Foster</b>	<b>Council on Aging</b>
<b>Ewana Lindo-Smith</b>	<b>Planning &amp; Development</b>
<b>Amanda Williams</b>	<b>Police Traffic</b>
<b>Brian Merrigan</b>	<b>Police Patrol</b>
<b>James Kirby</b>	<b>Fire Firefighter</b>
<b>Edward Walker Jr.</b>	<b>DPW Sanitation</b>
<b>Jed Fehrenbach</b>	<b>IT</b>
<b>Kenyatta Gomez</b>	<b>Fire Firefighter</b>
<b>Brian Cadman</b>	<b>Fire Firefighter</b>



Name	Department
Joseph Stroschio	Fire Firefighter
Nasir Khan	Fire Prevention
Dai Nguyen	Health
John Jennings	Police Patrol
Jay Hersey	DPW Water and Sewer
Tom Brady	DPW Parks & Open Space
Robert Carney	Building Maintenance
Olga Silwa	Council on Aging
Rogelio Castillo	Building Maintenance
Jacqueline Joy	Police Crossing Guards
John Canney	Police Patrol
Kevin Fallon	Police Traffic
Justin O'Kane	Police Criminal Investigation
Patrick Elwood	Police Patrol



*Thank  
you!*